

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

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| Project Name: Borderview Bell Ranch pipeline project | Proposed Implementation Date: Summer of 2012 |
| Proponent: William Allestad of Borderview Bell Ranch. | |
| Type and Purpose of Action: Borderview Bell Ranch has requested a Land Use License (LUL) to install a stockwater pipeline across State land. The proposed pipeline would cross through Section 36 - Twp. 37N – Rge. 38E in Valley County. The project area consists of native rangeland and surface ownership is a mixture of BLM, private, and State. | |
| Location: Section 36 - Twp. 37N – Rge. 38E in Valley County | County: Valley |

I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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| 1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project. | <p>NRCS contacted the Glasgow Office notifying us of the proposed project in February of 2011. At this time, NRCS informed the Glasgow Office that the project would likely not be implemented for a year or two. Glasgow Staff reviewed the preliminary plan and asked NRCS to move a stock water tank off of the State land. NRCS changed the plan per our request.</p> <p>March 2011, Glasgow field staff sent out and received back an application, from Borderview Ranch, for a Land Use License. Borderview Ranch also submitted a onetime rental fee of \$150.00 for the pipeline LUL #4149.</p> <p>February 2012, NRCS informed the Glasgow Office that the final plan for this project was being finalized. Glasgow staff received the final plan and made an onsite visit to determine if there were any environmental or other concerns regarding the project.</p> |
| 2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED: | No other permits are required. |
| 3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: | <p>Action Alternative: Approve the application for LUL #4149 therefore allowing the proponent to install a stock water pipeline across Section 36 - Twp. 37N - Rge. 38E in Valley County.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Deny the Land Use License application.</p> |

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

| RESOURCE | [Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS N = Not Present or No Impact will occur. Y = Impacts may occur (explain below) |
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| 4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactable or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations? | <p>There are no fragile, compactable, or unstable soils present within the project area. No unusual geologic features are present near the project area.</p> <p>Action: Temporary compaction and/or disturbance of soils near the surface and located directly within the</p> |

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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| | <p>pipeline's route would occur. No long term impacts are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the geology or soil characteristics would occur.</p> |
| <p>5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?</p> | <p>The proposed action would increase the area's stock water supply via a water pipeline servicing water tanks. No substantial ground water or surface water supplies are known to exist within this project area. Water quality would not be negatively impacted.</p> <p>Action: The area's ability to supply livestock and wildlife with water would be increased. Negative impacts to the water quality, quantity, and/or distribution of surface and ground water on or around the project area are not anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the water quality, quantity, and/or distribution would occur.</p> |
| <p>6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?</p> | <p>The project area is not located in an area subject to air quality regulations or zoning.</p> <p>Action: No impacts to air quality are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to air quality would occur.</p> |
| <p>7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?</p> | <p>A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program did not identify any plant species of concern or potential concern. No rare plants or cover types are present within the project area. Plant communities would not be altered long term.</p> <p>Action: Temporary disturbances to plants from installation of the pipeline would occur.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the vegetation cover, quantity, and/or quality would occur.</p> |
| <p>8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?</p> | <p>The proposed project is located in an area that is predominately native rangeland. Animal species typically associated with this type of environment likely use the project area.</p> <p>Action: The area within the proposed action area will be disturbed temporarily. No lasting impacts to terrestrial, avian, and/or aquatic life and habitats are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to terrestrial, avian, and/or aquatic life and habitats would occur.</p> |
| <p>9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Sensitive Species or Species of special concern?</p> | <p>No federally listed or endangered species or identified habitats are present within the proposed project area. A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program identified the Iowa Darter as a species of concern and the Brook stickleback, Brassy Minnow, and</p> |

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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| | <p>Plains Minnow as potential species of concern within the project area's township. There are no wetlands near the project area. No federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present. The listed species are all fish and minnow species that live in stream and prairie rivers.</p> <p>Action: No impacts to unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources would occur.</p> |
| 10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present? | <p>The proposed pipeline route was flagged out by NRCS personnel. NRCS kept the pipeline corridor away from any areas containing large amounts of surface rock and possible archaeological features. DNRC staff also walked the proposed route across the State land and no historical, archeological, and/or paleontological resources were identified.</p> <p>Action: No impacts to the areas historical, archeological, and/or paleontological resources are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the areas historical, archeological, and/or paleontological resources will occur.</p> |
| 11.AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light? | <p>The landscape consists of native rangeland across gently to heavily rolling plains. The pipeline may or may not be marked for servicing needs. The disturbed area from the pipeline's installation would be minimal. The area is not considered a populated or scenic area. No excessive noise or light would occur.</p> <p>Action: No impacts to the areas aesthetics are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the areas aesthetics would occur.</p> |
| 12.DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project? | <p>The area does not contain limited resources. Nearby activities consist primarily of ranching operations with some agricultural production occurring a few miles to the east. The proposed action would increase the area's stock water supply via a water pipeline servicing water tanks.</p> <p>Action: No impacts to the demands of environmental resources such as land, water, air, and/or energy resources are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the demands of environmental resources such as land, water, air, and/or energy resources would occur.</p> |

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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| 13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract? | Action: No impacts to studies, plans, and/or projects pertinent to this area are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to studies, plans, and/or projects would occur. |
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III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

| RESOURCE | [Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES |
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| 14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area? | Action: No impacts to human health and/or safety risks are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to human health and/or safety risks would occur. |
| 15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities? | The area is primarily used for ranching. The pipeline is proposed as part of an 11,874 acre (+/-) grazing system. The designers of this system anticipate that the grazing system would better distribute grazing and benefit the project area. Action: No impacts to industrial, commercial, and/or agricultural activities and production would occur. No Action: No impacts to industrial, commercial, and/or agricultural activities and production would occur. |
| 16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number. | Action: No impacts to quantity and distribution of employment are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to quantity and distribution of employment would occur. |
| 17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue? | Action: No impacts to the state tax base and/or tax revenue are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to the state tax base and/or tax revenues would occur. |
| 18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed? | Action: No impacts to traffic levels or government services are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to traffic levels or use or government services would occur. |
| 19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect? | Action: No impacts to local environmental plans and goals are anticipated occur. No Action: No impacts to local environmental plans and goals would occur. |
| 20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential | The tract of State land is not easily accessible and provides limited recreational opportunities. No wilderness areas are located near the proposed project area. |

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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| within the tract? | <p>Action: No impacts to recreational quality or recreational opportunities within the project area and/or surrounding lands are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the quality of recreational and wilderness activities would occur.</p> |
| 21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing? | <p>Action: No impacts to the density and/or distribution of population and housing are anticipated to occur.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the density and/or distribution of population and housing would occur.</p> |
| 22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible? | <p>Action: No impacts to the area's social structures, native/traditional lifestyles, or communities are anticipated to occur.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to social structures, native/traditional lifestyles, or communities would occur.</p> |
| 23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area? | <p>Action: No impacts to the area's cultural uniqueness and/or diversity are anticipated to occur.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the area's cultural uniqueness and/or diversity would occur.</p> |
| 24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES: | <p>Action: The State trust has received money for the \$25.00 application fee and would receive a onetime \$150.00 rental fee for the LUL.</p> <p>No Action: The State trust would not receive the onetime \$150.00 rental fee for the LUL.</p> |

EA Checklist Prepared By: /s/
Matthew Poole (Land Use Specialist)

Date: April 4, 2012

IV. FINDING

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| 25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED: | Select Action alternative |
| 26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS: | Pipeline will cause no damage to the land and will improve grazing distribution on state and surrounding lands. |
| 27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis: | |

☐ EIS ☐ More Detailed EA ☒ No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By: R. Hoyt Richards Glasgow Unit Manager
Name Title

/s/
Signature

Date: April 4, 2012

